

TOWN OF LOS GATOS
110 East Main Street, Los Gatos, CA 95030 (408) 354-6872

SUMMARY MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE GENERAL PLAN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS **MARCH 19, 2009**
HELD AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, 208 EAST MAIN STREET, LOS
GATOS, CALIFORNIA.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by John Bourgeois.

ATTENDANCE

Members present: John Bourgeois, Barbara Cardillo, Jim Foley, Perry Hariri, Marcia Jensen, Tim Lundell, Libby Lane, Melanie Hanssen, Jane Ogle, Chuck Sloan, Barbara Spector, Tom Spilsbury, Deborah Weinstein, Gordon Yamate

Members absent: Kevin Kelly, Joe Pirzynski, Dan Ross, Margaret Smith

Staff present: Bud Lortz, Deputy Town Manager; Wendie Rooney, Director of Community Development; Todd Capurso, Director of Parks & Public Works; Scott Seaman, Police Chief; Regina Falkner, Director of Community Services; Suzanne Davis, Associate Planner; Joel Paulson, Associate Planner; Heidi Long, Library

Public attendees: Lee Quintana; Brandy Pech, Youth Commission; Barbara Holden, Parks Commission

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None

ITEM 1 OVERVIEW OF TOWN DEPARTMENTS

Bud Lortz introduced the new Community Development Director, Wendie Rooney.

Todd Capurso, Director Parks & Public Works provided an overview of what his department does. The Town has a lot of park and open space acreage. Amenities need to be evaluated to determine if the needs of the community are being met. Other deficiencies are the lack of a skate park and a shortage of sports fields.

Traffic and circulation: Future and proposed development may necessitate modifications to intersections that are impacted. The Town has a traffic calming program to address and minimize traffic impacts in neighborhoods.

Parking is a big issue, particularly in the Downtown. The goal is to increase parking availability for residents and visitors.

Regina Falkner, Director of Community Services, talked about programs administered by her department:

- Below Market Price (BMP) program
- Community Housing program
- Senior programs – recreational, food programs, resource referral (housing, food, transportation)
- Youth Commission
- Funding provided to various Non-Profit agencies that aid the community
- Reduction of Greenhouse gas emissions
- Growing Greener campaign – promotes a green lifestyle

Bud Lortz stated that the goal is to be done with the General Plan update by August 2010. Primarily want to make sure any important background information isn't missing from the report. He introduced Chad Markell and Joanna Jansen from DCE.

Joanna Jansen, DCE, reviewed the agenda. She noted that a Community Workshop will be held on April 18, 2009 to provide an overview and receive feedback from the public. A series of community panels will then be held for each of the General Plan topics on May 2, 2009. The fundamental purpose of the Background Report is to get everyone on the same page.

Land Use

- General Plan land use designations
- Zoning designations (implementation of land use)
- Overlays and special planning areas
- Upcoming development projects – public improvements and private proposals
- Existing land uses:
 - a. Hillside and low density residential = 50%
 - b. Higher density residential = 5%
 - c. Open Space – 27% (4% of that is Agricultural)
 - d. Commercial/Industrial 3%

Comments:

- Measurement on page 2-1: land use designations by persons/acre - useful way to express?
- Comparison from other communities in the area – how does the Town compare?
- Land use designations defined differently than existing General Plan – 0 to 1 DU/AC versus persons per acre.
- Table on 2.7 – HR-20 density should be shown as units per acre
- Density versus intensity – what it means (FAR to address intensity) – how was .40 for the R-1 zone arrived at
- Page 2-17: upcoming development projects – indicate that this is a snapshot in time.
- Projects that are cited leads to the assumption that they will be built

- Clarify what vacant means: underutilized, available for development, etc. (vacant typically means there is not a built structure on the parcel)
- New projects on former car dealership sites – redevelopment? (these sites show as commercial in the land use data)

Community Design

- Community context/character
- Building blocks – core area, neighborhoods (10), neighborhood shopping centers (4), commercial corridors (4), employment centers (2)
- Community features – gateways, destinations, connections, landmarks, scenic corridors and views

Comments:

- Blossom Hill Manor is not included (County pocket)
- Include discussion about County pockets in Land Use section
- Names of “neighborhoods” not commonly used – e.g. Pennsylvania-Hernandez (add comment that areas are being characterized rather than identifying specific neighborhoods such as the Almond Grove)
- Identify areas that don’t feel part of the Town – East and North Los Gatos, Carlton Avenue, Oka/Mozart

Climate Change and Carbon Footprint

- Greenhouse gas (GHC) and global warming
- Other compounds
- Sources of GHC emissions
- Community planning and the carbon footprint - How we build, where do we build and how we handle the carbon footprint.
- Determining the carbon footprint
- Los Gatos’ carbon footprint (direct and indirect sources)
- Regional GHC emissions (Santa Clara County second highest in the Bay Area after Contra Costa County)
- Los Gatos 2% of County total

Comments:

- Are statistics being counted twice - community percentages versus County totals
- Growth in Los Gatos and reduction of carbon footprint takes into account future technological advances (e.g. new vehicles emit less, plug-ins for electric vehicles in parking lots)
- Traffic flow affects emissions (traffic idling has higher output)
- Mobile sources – how much does it contribute?

Parks & Recreation

- Parks and recreation facilities – 41 parks in town, 17 operated by Town of Los Gatos

- Multi-use trail and bikeways
- Inventory showed that there are 100 multi-use fields in Town of Los Gatos

Comments:

- Community garden, skate park, other desired facilities not mentioned (the Background Report is a statement of what currently exists)
- Why are private facilities included (holistic approach to what is out there)
- Transportation section includes trails projects – should they be included in this section?
- Sports fields – characterizing facilities as baseball fields may not be representative; number of acres may be more appropriate (Council recognized and accepted recreation inventory at time of completion)
- Provide sub-categories for public and private open space

Youth

- 30% of Los Gatos households have at least one person under 18 years old
- Town services for youth – Youth Commission, Community Services Commission, Parks Commission, Library
- Non-profit organizations

Comments:

- How was 1970 chosen as a baseline
- Provide a demographics comparison using percentages versus actual numbers (should be similar to the chart for seniors)
- Include a chart to show trends
- Clarification of the reference to Claritas data (private data vendor)
- Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation is not mentioned – this organization provides a large number of programs to the community
- How are non-profit organizations identified; many churches have youth programs (missing organizations can be added)
- Desirable to have a utilization/needs assessment

Seniors

- Current median age is 45
- Seniors (65 and older) are 17% of the Town's population
- There has been an 88% increase in the senior population since 1970
- Town services for seniors include healthcare and social services, housing, transportation, recreation activities
- Non-profit organizations

Comments:

- Provide a graph or chart to show trends
- A utilization/needs assessment is desirable

- Add discussion on what is needed in various categories such as affordable housing and rentals

Population & Housing

- Current Town population is 28,800
- Majority of housing stock is single-family from the 1950s and 1970s
- Currently 12,000 households in Town
- Average household size is 2.35 persons
- Higher percentage of owner occupied housing units
- Over 50% of owner occupied homes are valued at \$1 million or more
- 30% of renters are paying too much rent (more than 30% of income)

Comments:

- Current vacancy rate desirable
- Clarify that average rent is for all unit types
- Need an average income for seniors versus the general population (income by age range)

Jobs-Housing Balance

- 1.5 jobs/household (ideal balance is 1.0 to 1.5)
- 90% of Town residents work in Santa Clara County
- 17% of residents work in Town

Transportation & Circulation

- Roadway system
- Planned and proposed projects
- Existing traffic operations
- Traffic calming
- Pedestrian facilities
- Parking
- Freight system
- Transit services (6 bus routes through Town)

Comments:

- Identify segments of roads with the most congestion
- Traffic generation versus Level of Service (LOS)
- Traffic calming projects –improvements to an area sometimes create other impacts
- Problem areas not identified

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lee Quintana commented on traffic calming and pedestrian safety. Regarding the jobs-housing balance, figures to relate the type of job to the type of housing should be

identified. For seniors and housing, provide information to relate housing affordability to income and include assisted living facilities. Provide statistics from the prior General Plan update to now for youth and seniors. Under land use clarify if historical residential is inclusive of designated historic districts. Address land use intensification that occurs with redevelopment, including the number and size of dwelling units and how intensity has been affected since the last General Plan update.

Brandy Pech asked for clarification on operational standards and commented that youth non-profit organizations have been left off out (these can be added).

Next Steps

- Saturday, April 18, 2009 Community Workshop #2: 10:00 am to noon.
- Saturday, May 2, 2009 Community Panels on Sustainability, Recreation & Open Space, Youth and Seniors: approx. 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- May 28, 2009 GPAC meeting: Issues refinement and alternatives development.


OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM. The next meeting of the General Plan Advisory Committee is scheduled for April --, 2009.

Prepared by:


Suzanne Davis, Associate Planner